Mapline

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What Makes the Baskes Collection So Unusual?

Research libraries, like other libraries, acquire many books one at a time. Their book selectors read reviews and order new books to keep up with subject strengths and old books to fill in historical gaps. But to an extent unknown in other types of libraries, research libraries also acquire books in large lots. Sometimes these are collections formed by dealers; for example, the 110 broadsheet newsmaps by Nicolas Visscher, which the Newberry acquired in the late 1960s. More often, though, these *en bloc* acquisitions are the gifts of collectors, usually people with close ties to the library or its host institution. Indeed, the names of many of America's premier research libraries reflect their origins in the collections of individuals: the Astor and Lenox libraries, which form the basis of New York Public's research collections; the John Carter Brown Library; the Huntington, Bancroft, and Clark libraries in California; the Folger in Washington; and on and on.

Roger Baskes in the Newberry Map Room

The Newberry is unusual among American research libraries in not being able to point to *one original core collection*. Walter Loomis Newberry died before he could properly dispose of his library, which survived him by only three years to burn in the Chicago Fire. When his last daughter died without issue in 1887 and his will came into effect, the trustees were left with no books, but some 2.15 million dollars. Depending on which index one uses, this is about the equivalent of $300 to 600 million in today's money—certainly not the worst circumstances in which to launch a library.

The library trustees bought with a vengeance, and in the first 15 years of operation, built the Cobb building and acquired more than 100,000 books. Among these were several private collections, including the 2,500 early books and manuscripts assembled by Cincinnati hardware baron Henry Probasco and the 17,000 volumes of Prince Louis Lucien Bonaparte's library of linguistics. Both of these collections were purchased, but most of our

"Louisiana and Florida" in Robert Laurie and James Whittle, *New and Elegant Imperial Sheet Atlas,* (London, 1800). Baskes oversize G 1015 .N48 1800. p. 50. Gift of Roger S. Baskes

later "collectors' libraries" have been acquired by gift or bequest, most notably those of Edward E. Ayer (1911), John M. Wing (1917), William B. Greenlee (1937), Everett D. Graff (1964), Hermon Dunlap Smith (1982), and Rudy L. Ruggles (1985). All these men were Newberry trustees, as was Louis Silver, whose remarkable collection of rare books we purchased from his heirs in 1964.

All these acquisitions so strengthened and shaped our holdings that then-president Lawrence W. ("Bill") Towner began referring to the Newberry as "an uncommon collection of uncommon collections." And all of these collectors bought books that interested them, without much, if any, thought as to how, or even if, their collections might supplement or duplicate books already at the Newberry. And then came Roger Baskes.

Roger, a native Chicagoan and an attorney in private practice, made his first cartographic purchase in the fall of 1984. At a show at the Palmer House, George Ritzlin exhibited an 1860 German school atlas that captured Roger's interest. He bought it. A year later, he again went to the book fair in Chicago, and also dropped in at the shop of Louis Loeb-Laroque in Paris, where he bought an 1838 atlas by Lapie. He still didn't think of himself as a collector – he'd just acquired a couple of interesting books with maps.

The following year, 1986, he found time to buy a few more books with maps from George Ritzlin and to enroll in David Buisseret's class on the history of cartography at

the Newberry. Roger dates the beginning of his serious collecting to 1987, as well as his realization that it was the book of maps, the *atlas*, that would become the focus of his new hobby. He bought 66 atlases that year and invited the undersigned and Jim Akerman to lunch, to discuss his collecting and get our advice.

By the following year, 1988, Roger humorously admits he was "losing control." He and his wife Julie toured the English bookshops that fall, hit the London Book Fair, and picked up 112 atlases. In 1989, the take was 161 atlases, and for the next 19 years (through 2007) part of every June was spent in London visiting dealers, attending fairs, and meeting other collectors. He had also come to adopt the idiosyncratic (and very liberal) definition of an "atlas" as any book with five or more maps. So travel guides like those published by Murray, Baedeker, and Muirhead, which he loved anyway, and whose wonderful maps documented the world so thoroughly, began to arrive at his office in impressive numbers, as did books on cartography in general.

So far, the story of Roger's collecting does not differ that much from the patterns established by other ambitious collectors of the past – learn your field, get to know the reference books, the dealers, the libraries, the other collectors, and have fun. But around 1992, Roger's collecting took a turn altogether unexpected and rare among major collector/benefactors. He began to think not only about where his collection might end up, but about how it might best strengthen its future home. He decided, only eight years after making his first purchase, that he wanted

"Profile of Canal of Huchuetoca" in Alexander von Humboldt, *Atlas géographique et physique du royaume de la Nouvelle Espagne* (Paris, 1811). Baskes oversize G1545 .H8 1811

Kenyon Company, *Atlas and Plat Book of Clinton County, Indiana* (Frankfort, Ind.: Frankfort Morning Times, 1919).
Baskes oversize oG 4093 .C6 G46 1919 K4

to give his collection to the Newberry, and that he wanted, in the future, to buy only those atlases that the Newberry did not already own.

Imagine the joy with which we received this announcement! Imagine our chagrin at having to tell Roger that ... well, that we didn't really *know* with much confidence just which or how many atlases we *did* own! Our catalog was still on cards, and the last attempt at a list of our atlases dated to 1936. It wouldn't even be possible to look in our "shelf list" and see how many items had been classified as atlases, because our collections used a half-dozen classification schemes, and one large section of the library had never been classified at all. Subject headings in the card catalog wouldn't provide infallible leads, either, since an atlas of Iowa got the subject heading "Iowa – Maps."

To this impediment Roger had a wonderfully simple and generous solution – he would prepare a list of our atlases! He had developed for his own use a simple, yet powerful catalog of his collection using spreadsheets, and proposed to use the same system to collate our various holdings. And so began a period of virtual residence at the Newberry during which he used our shelf lists (he went through the entire 468 drawers card by card), and extensive examinations of the bookstacks to put together the first-ever comprehensive list of the Newberry's atlases. Not that he uncovered every book with five or more maps, but he was able to flush out many a "hidden" atlas, such as the 40 maps included in Beaurain's history of a 1674 military campaign in Flanders, the catalog record for which gives no clue to the presence of any maps.

Roger had by this time largely retired from the practice of law, and was able to devote a lot of time to the project.

Within a year, he presented us with a spreadsheet catalog of our atlases – all 5,000 of them, plus an additional 1,300 donated shortly before by Rand McNally & Co. With this list as his yardstick, he began to focus his acquisition efforts solely on atlases *that we did not own*. He made himself, in effect, our atlas acquisitions librarian, with the added blessing that the purchases came out of his budget, not the Newberry's. Of course we continued to acquire atlases, both as gifts from other sources, and by purchase, but we were careful henceforth to alert Roger to these new acquisitions so that he could update his list. Before too long, Map Cataloger Pat Morris had folded all of Roger's lists, of both his and our atlases, as well as his guidebooks and reference books, into the Newberry's online Cartographic Catalog (*www.biblioserver.com/newberry*), where a search on "Baskes Collection" now produces 15,412 records.

In 1995, Roger became a trustee of the Newberry (he later served as Chair of the Board, from 2006 to 2010). By this time Roger had become expert at ferreting out atlases from a wide variety of sources, including dealers' shops, fairs, and online tools such as Alibris and eBay. And he bought more and more large lots, including the personal libraries of cartographic historians Eila Campbell and Cor Koeman. He carried around a three-ring binder with a printout of the complete Newberry/Baskes atlas collection and used it to guide his purchases, which averaged about 500 volumes a year. As of this writing, the Baskes collection numbers more than 19,000 volumes.

In 2003, Roger began to transfer his collection, which he had packed into every corner of his home and office, to the Newberry. Well aware that full cataloging adds a substantial real cost to the library, he generously provided funds to pay the expenses of cataloging. With an in-house team in place, Baskes atlases began filling the scant remaining room in our packed bookstack building. But in a wonderfully serendipitous way, the bequest of another Newberry trustee and map lover, Gerald F. Fitzgerald, Sr., allowed the library to add an additional 13.75 miles of compact shelving to three floors of the stack building.

Perhaps there have been other library benefactors who have shared Roger's single-minded effort to tailor their own collecting to the needs of the institution. I do not know. But I do know that thanks to the generous gifts of his passion, knowledge, long hours, and financial resources, the Newberry has entered the twenty-first century with its cartographic holdings remarkably enhanced, and with a collection of atlases and guidebooks that are among the very best in the world.

Robert W. Karrow, Jr.

Spotlight on the Baskes Collection:

The Atlases of Christophe Tassin

Cartes générales et particulières de toutes les costes de France. VAULT Baskes oversize G1838 .T28 1634

Editor's note; This article is the first in a series of pieces highlighting interesting items from the ever-growing Baskes Collection.

The atlases in the Baskes Collection have often completed and so greatly strengthened existing holdings. A good example of this is the range of atlases compiled in the 1630s by Christophe Tassin, preeminent French cartographic publisher of the first half of the seventeenth century.

In *Les Atlas Français XVIe-XVIIe Siècles* (Paris, 1984), Mireille Pastoureau sets out the sequence of these atlases, numbering eight. The Library has for some time possessed four of them :

- *Les cartes générales de toutes les provinces de France*
- *Les plans et profils de toutes les principales villes...de France, part I*
- *Les plans et profils de toutes les principales villes...de France, part II*
- *Cartes des provinces de France et d'Espagne.*

It also has the *Carte générale de la géographie royale* on microfilm from the copy at the University of Chicago Library. In the Baskes Collection we find duplicates of these five items, and examples of three other atlases :

- *Cartes générales des royaumes et provinces de la haute et basse Allemagne*
- *Description de tous les cantons, villes, bourgs [etc.] du pays des Suisses*

- *Cartes générales et particulières de toutes les costes de France.*

The latter atlas is particularly rare, and of great technical interest to historians of cartography, since it precociously uses a key-map of France to set out the location of the following sequential maps along the French coast (see accompanying images). It also, of course, provides a wealth of information to historians interested in the development of French naval power. The two volumes of *Plans et profils* are also of great interest to urban historians, since they provide plans of virtually any French town in the early seventeenth century.

Finally, it is often useful to scholars primarily interested in the processes of printing to have more than one example of any given map. The combination of the Baskes material with the Newberry's holdings means that such comparisons are now possible in one location, opening opportunities unique on this side of the Atlantic, and rare outside the great national collections of Europe.

David Buisseret

Detail from *Cartes générales et particulières de toutes les costes de France.* VAULT Baskes oversize G1838 .T28 1634

Briefly Noted

Fellowships, Awards and Calls for Papers

The **Washington Map Society** announced that Kevin E. Sheehan has won the 2011 Ristow Prize for the best paper submitted in the history of cartography. Mr. Sheehan, in his final year as a doctoral student at Durham University in England, will have his winning paper, entitled "Utility and Aesthetic: The Function and Subjectivity of Two Fifteenth-Century Portolan Charts" published in *The Portolan*. Julie McDougall of the University of Edinburgh in Scotland received Honorable Mention for her paper, "British School Atlases: Influence on Style and Map Content, c. 1870 – c. 1930." Ms. McDougall presented a section of her work at the recent International Conference for the History of Cartography in Moscow. Visit the Washington Map Society website for information about future prizes: *http://home.earthlink.net/~docktor/ristow.htm*.

The trustees of the **J B Harley Research Fellowships Trust Fund** recently announced the 19th series of awards. The fellowships offer financial assistance to researchers working in the map collections of the United Kingdom. This year's awards have been granted to Karen Cook (Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas), "Reinventing George Bellas Greenough as a Map Designer"; Niels van Manen (Postdoctoral Researcher, VU University Amsterdam), "Mapping Fire Risk: Goad's Insurance Plans"; and Phillip Stern (Department of History, Duke University), "Mapping the Early Modern British Imperial Corporation." More information on past awards, numbers of applicants, and extracts from previous Fellows' reports can be found at *www.maphistory.info/harlflws.html*. Interested readers may also find guidelines for applying for a fellowship at *www.maphistory.info/application.html*. The deadline for submissions is November 1, 2012.

Announcements

Christopher Baruth has retired as full-time Curator of the American Geographical Society Library at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Libraries after 31 years. During his tenure at AGSL, Dr. Baruth oversaw many projects, including the addition of the Archives of the Association of American Geographers and the McColl Collection of China-related materials to the library collections, fellowship programs, and numerous digital and online initiatives. In addition to his work at AGSL, Dr. Baruth served as Executive Director of the North American Cartographic Information Society and as member of the Standing Committee for Geography and Map Libraries of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions. His published work includes *GEODEX: GEOgraphic InDEX System for Map Series* (1988) and articles in *Geographical Review*, *Journal of the International Map Collectors' Society*, and *Care and Preservation of Manuscripts* as well as a chapter in *The Map Library in the New Millenium* (2001).

The **International Society for the History of the Map** (ISHM), a new international learned society, was established at its founding meeting on December 1, 2011. The objectives of the organization, as stated in its constitution, are "to advance the study of the history of maps in all societies and over all periods of time by promoting the education of the general public on the subject; by promoting communication between members and others interested in the subject; [and] by promoting the research, teaching and funding of the subject." The ISHM invites interested parties to register to become founding members of the organization through its website: *http://ishm.elte.hu*.

The **OldMapsOnline Portal**, an online finding aid of historical maps from libraries around the world, has launched. The project is the result of a collaboration between the Great Britain Historical GIS Project based at the University of Portsmouth, UK, and Klokan Technologies GmbH, Switzerland. The OldMapsOnline Portal allows users to search for online digital historical maps housed in numerous collections at different institutions through a single interface. Searches can be narrowed down by keyword queries, use of an interactive map window, and by date using a timeline. All search results provide a direct link to the map image on the website of the host institution (which provides its own terms of use and retains full copyright and IPR rights relating to map images and metadata records). The portal can be accessed at *www.oldmapsonline.org*. Those wishing to become involved as a user-tester or join as a content provider may direct inquiries to *info@oldmapsonline.org*.

Arthur and Janet Holzheimer Fellowship in the History of Cartography

The Newberry is pleased to announce the establishment of The Arthur and Janet Holzheimer Fellowship in the History of Cartography.

For many years, the Newberry had supported residential fellowships for scholars studying the history of cartography utilizing the library's renowned collection of maps dating from the fifteenth to the twenty-first centuries. Since 1999, a generous annual gift from Mr. and Mrs. Holzheimer has sustained this program, providing funding for visiting scholars and the publications that result from their work. Now the Holzheimers have endowed the fellowship, ensuring that this tradition of map scholarship at the Newberry will continue for many years to come.

Art and Jan Holzheimer

Mr. and Mrs. Holzheimer have been generous friends and supporters of the Newberry, contributing both to the library's general operations as well as its map collection. The Arthur Holzheimer Map Fund, established in 1983, supports the acquisition of antiquarian maps and atlases, as well as current reference publications and monographs in the history of cartography. Mr. Holzheimer is an accomplished map collector in his own right, specializing in printed world maps, the exploration of the American West, and the cartography of the lower Mississippi River and the Gulf Coast. He has worked as a volunteer in the Newberry's map department for more than 25 years.

Mr. and Mrs. Holzheimer are active and generous supporters of a number of other Chicago and Midwestern cultural institutions. In the world of cartography, they have supported the annual Holzheimer Maps and America Lecture since 1990 at the American Geographical Society Library of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee; the David Woodward Cartography Fellowships at the University of Wisconsin-Madison; the American Friends of the J.B. Harley Research Fellowship; and the History of Cartography Project. They are long-standing and regular participants in international organizations devoted to map study, including the Society for the History of Discoveries and the International Map Collectors' Society. We are deeply grateful, not only for this new gift, but also for their enthusiastic lifelong support for map collections and the history of cartography, both here at the Newberry and around the world.

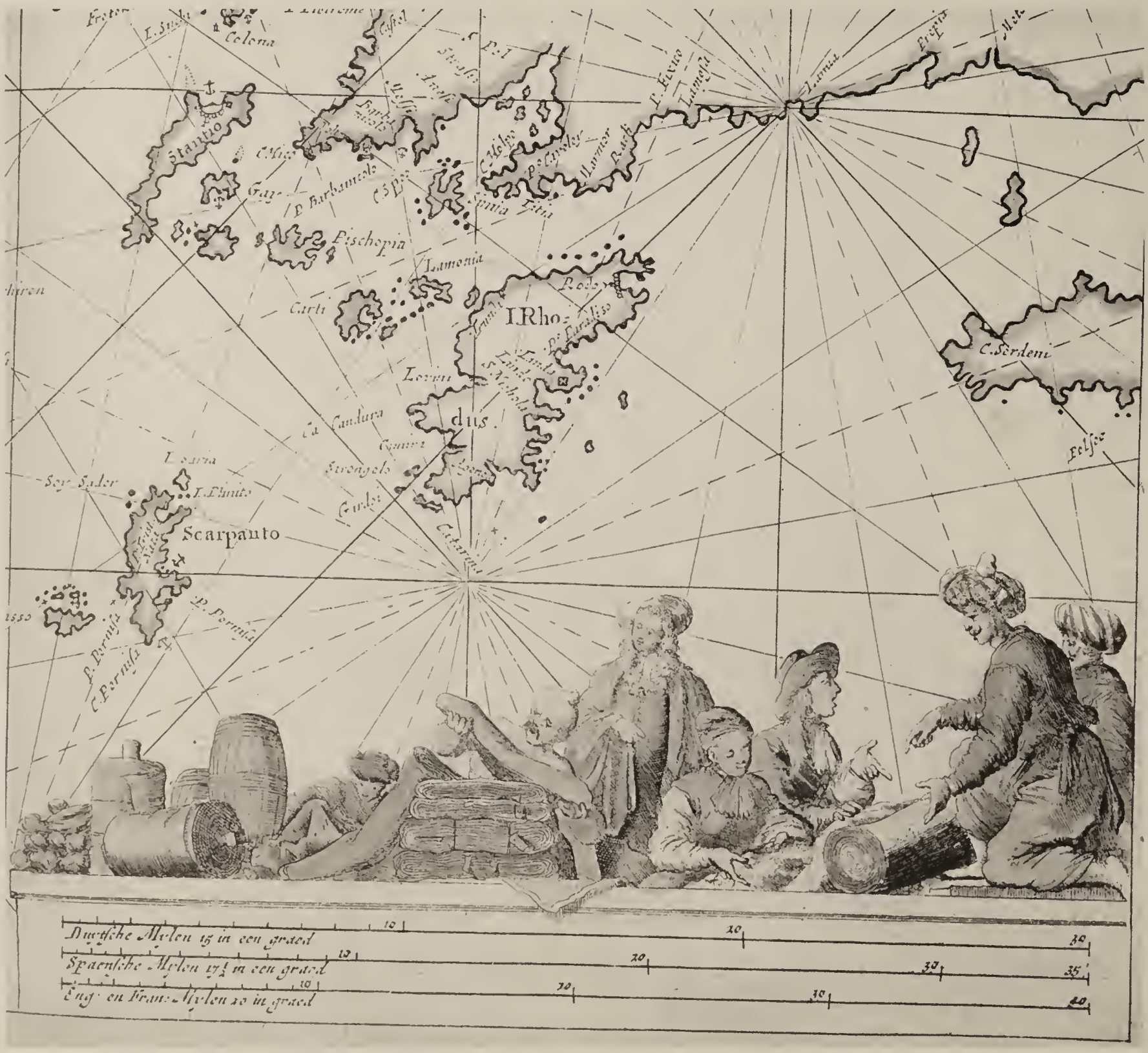
The Arthur and Janet Holzheimer Fellowship is open to Ph.D. candidates or post-doctoral scholars wishing to pursue cartographic studies in residence at the Newberry. Projects must be related to the history of cartography and focus on cartographic materials in the Newberry's collection. Further information can be found on the Newberry's website at *http://www.newberry.org/fellowships.*

In Review

George Tolias, *Mapping Greece, 1420-1800, a History. Maps in the Margarita Samourkas Collection* (Athens: National Hellenic Research Foundation, 2011)

This substantial and beautiful volume is based on the maps in the Margarita Samourkas Collection, of which it contains a catalog. Its main part consists of a history of the cartography of Greece from Ptolemy to Le Rouge, and the argument is accompanied by excellently reproduced maps. The four chapters are divided into "Experience, doctrine and Authority," "Defining Greece," "The Age of Atlas," and "From the Academy to the Field." This volume covers Crete as well as mainland Greece, and takes in not only the printed maps in the collection, but also a few of the most significant manuscript maps that are needed to maintain the argument. As usual, it is intellectually delightful to take a new "cut" at the history of western cartography, and this volume comes to join others that take this approach by geographical region.

David Buisseret



Dutch traders in the eastern Mediterranean. Detail from the maritime chart of the Aegean by Johannes van Keulen, Amsterdam 1682 , catalog number 0797 in the Margarita Samourkas Collection

Martin Brückner is the first MacLean Fellow

Martin Brückner, the first MacLean Fellow, is pictured here after his presentation to the Chicago Map Society on April 19, 2012.

The Newberry is pleased to announce that Dr. Martin Brückner, Associate Professor in English and American literature at University of Delaware, is the first recipient of the MacLean Fellowship in the History of Cartography. The fellowship, supported by Newberry Trustee and map collector Barry MacLean, offers recipients a period of residence for research at Mr. MacLean's private map collection, numbering 35,000 items. MacLean Fellows will describe major areas of strength within the collection and encourage its scholarly use through publication and public lectures. The Newberry nominates MacLean Fellows based on their record of scholarship in areas suited to the collection. Through the fellowship, Dr. Brückner is pursuing work in Mr. MacLean's remarkable holdings of American wall maps of the eighteenth through early twentieth centuries. He already has presented part of his research, in a public lecture titled "The Lithographed Map: Innovation, Imitation, and Nineteenth Century Consumer Culture," at the April 19 meeting of the Chicago Map Society.

Mary Ann MacLean and Newberry Trustee Barry MacLean

The Hermon Dunlap Smith Center for the History of Cartography at the Newberry Library was founded in 1972 to promote the study of the history of cartography through public programs, institutes and seminars, research projects, fellowships, and publications. *Mapline* (ISSN 0196-1881) is the Center's newsletter. The cost of an annual subscription, inclusive of postage, is $10.00 for delivery in North America and $15.00 for international delivery. Back issues (as available) can be purchased for $3.50 each. An index of past articles and book reviews is available on our web site. We encourage submissions of news items, lead articles, or review copies of recent books; please send them to the attention of the *Mapline* editor at smithctr@newberry.org or at the address listed below:

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Map Talk

From Margaret MacMillan, *Paris 1919; Six Months that Changed the World* (New York, 2001), p. 435

After the First World War, in 1919 representatives of the victorious powers – the United States, Britain and France – were trying in Paris to assign areas of influence in what is now Turkey, where Kemel Atatürk would in fact before long render these calculations irrelevant. The English diplomat Harold Nicolson was summoned by prime minister Lloyd George to bring a map of Asia Minor, so that they could think about the area to be offered to the Italians, who were also present. The conversation went like this:

The Italians asked for land to the south of Smyrna. "Oh no!" said Lloyd George, "you can't have that – it is all full of Greeks." Nicolson realized with consternation that Lloyd George had mistaken the colors indicating contours for population distribution [and told him so]. "Lloyd George takes this correction with great good humour. He is as quick as a kingfisher." When someone pointed out that mandates must be with the consent and wishes of the people concerned, "there was great jollity..."

A skeptical commentator remarked of this scene that he had seen "three all-powerful, all-ignorant men sitting there and partitioning continents with only a child to take notes for them." Certainly Lloyd George's mistake does not inspire confidence...

Detail from "Italy and the Balkan States" in George Philip & Son, *University Atlas* (London, 1960)